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THE VILLAGE DOCTOR.

A WONDERFULLY wise man is the village doctor! One of the most important men in the village, exciting in all a due admiration for his book-learning and medical skill. He has a cure for all the ills that flesh is heir to, he understands all the symptoms of a patient by a glance, he appears to comprehend intuitively where the pain is chiefly felt, and seems to be no less intimately acquainted with the very remedy that will

country people have more faith in old Dr. Goodman than in all the College of Physicians, and more respect for his simple remedies than for the whole materia medica.

There he sits with a calm, sagacious, honest countenance, his grey hair rather long and wavy, telling, as it were, of his free handsome youth,—spectacles on nose. He wears no suit of sable, but is very much at his ease in shirt sleeves, open



THE VILLAGE DOCTOR.—DESIGNED AND ENGRAVED BY THE BROTHERS GIRARDET.

make the sick man sound. There is healing in his very presence. A shake of the head is enough to produce despair; a nod awakens hope and comfort; there never was so wise a man as the country doctor. This is at least the opinion of the villagers. It may be, the faculty would by no means be impressed with his sagacity, for, if some people speak true, he has passed no examination, studied in no regular and orthodox fashion, but acted as his own instructor, and dubbed himself a doctor. But what of that? good sense and skilful practice may sometimes exist apart from regular practitioners, and the

waistcoat, drab shorts, and grey worsted stockings; in one hand a snuff-box, from which he has just removed a pinch; and withal has so pleasant a look that one feels inclined to trust him.

The room in which he sits is his laboratory. It serves, indeed, for other purposes, for "parlour, and kitchen, and hall," but bears the dignified title of study. A very room of wizardry it is to simple country folk—a mysterious apartment, the stronghold of all wisdom, a sanctum sanctorum that one must enter cautiously. From a cord suspended across the ceiling

hang simples of various kinds—herbs gathered from all quarters; on a shelf are ranged bottles and jars of healing mixtures, ready to do battle with disease. On the floor stands a pestle and mortar; and on the window-seat are a pair of scales and an open book, and above them, more ominous than all the rest, more to be revered than herbs and potions, a human skull. Doubtless, the doctor is a learned man—it gives a scientific air to the place, which makes our faith in him the stronger.

But a human skull is a terrible object, something that produces an indescribable dread, especially to the peasant girl in the background of the picture, who, with her hand to her chin and a strange solemnity on her face, eyes the eyeless remnant of humanity with a glance of timidity and suspicion. The peasant girl has accompanied her mother and young brother to the domicile of the wise doctor, for the boy grows feverish and restless, and has filled his mother's heart with fear. How solemn she looks, as the boy sits on her lap and she details the symptoms of his complaint; how she multiplies every particular of his disorder!

"He does not appear so bad, poor little ducky!" she says, and at every term of endearment draws him closer to her; "but he is very ill. He very often weeps, dear treasure! he seems to lose his appetite, and cannot relish our simple fare; we have obtained for him little dainties, but he appears so listless, dear heart! that I am quite afraid. I think he requires more sleep. He will never play with his two sisters; he will suffer none but his mother to touch him, pretty lamb! and never seems happy."

"Is he your youngest child?" asks the doctor.

"He is, sir, the last of all; pretty poppet!"

"Are your other children girls?"

"They are, sir; alas! this is the only boy. The girls are well enough. This youngest one who is with me, aids me to carry her brother about; it is for him we feel so much—no appetite, no sleep, no cheerfulness. Alas, we would give our all for him!"

"And you really think that he is suffering severely?"

"We do; indeed, doctor, his hands are hot, and his mouth parched, and he has no energy, poor little lamb!"

"And," says the doctor solemnly, "there is no remedy but one."

"Ah! what is that, doctor?"

"Nothing! Submit him to the same discipline as your other children; do not pamper his appetite, and so spoil his taste and his digestion; do not humour his tempers, and so ruin his character and blight his prospects and your own. Let him go out into the fields and take care of the sheep, let him share with the rest at table; what others can eat, he can eat too, a small piece of meat, a good supply of bread and potatoes, and nothing but clear water to drink, will make a man of him."

"But he is so delicate," says the anxious mother, "and so young. Really, is it possible that this can be good for him? He is so very, very dear to us."

"I like not these over-loved Benjamins," says the doctor, "they nearly always grow up to be selfish men. The malady of the child is plain enough: he has eaten at all hours, and spent three parts of the day at table."

"But, doctor, he can eat nothing; we are obliged to give him spices, and sauces, and cream, and sweet-stuff, something to tempt his listless 'appetite.'"

"Woman," says the doctor, "the boy wants air and exercise. Nature will make a cure of him if nature be permitted to have her own way. Medicine can do nothing for him. Let him rough it with the other children of the family; do not shelter him from every wind that blows, as if every breath of heaven were loaded with infection; let him fare as the rest fare, and labour as the rest labour, and, depend upon it, he will eat and sleep and be as merry as you could wish."

Admirably the artist has depicted the scene. Every detail is carefully preserved, and there is that life-like character in all the figures, and that careful attention to general effect, that makes the pencil tell the incident better than the pen.

THE KING OF OUDE'S DINNER PARTY.

WE had the satisfaction of waiting from half-past seven, the time appointed, to half-past eight, before the king sent to say he was ready—perhaps in revenge for our keeping him waiting in the morning. What we expected to have been a great bore, however, turned out one of the gayest and most amusing festivals I ever was at. We went as in the morning; and the procession with lighted torches, glittering arms, and prancing horses, through the illuminated streets; the arrival at the Durbar in a court crowded with people, and literally blazing with light from thousands of lamps; the dinner itself, with its accessories of jewelled orientals, evening-dressed ladies, officers in uniform, music and glitter; the fire-works, and illuminated courtyard with playing fountains, altogether made a scene such as I never saw before, and probably never shall see again. It was more like the last scene in the "Island of Jewels" than anything else that I can think of. The *fête* was in honour of the marriage of the king's youngest son, a boy of four or five years of age, to a daughter or niece of the prime minister; and the little imp of a bridegroom was brought out splendidly dressed to be exhibited to the company. The dinner was given in the Durbar-room of the old palace, the red-hot verandah-like place we visited on the first day, and, thanks to the open sides of the building, and the coolness of the night air, the temperature was very agreeable. The king, his brother, and sons, received us near the head of the stairs, and we at once proceeded to the business of the evening. We were not seated, however, without some struggle for places, and I found myself between Grosvenor and, perhaps, the most intelligent-looking native present, who proved to be the king's brother-in-law. Another interesting neighbour was a roast guinea-fowl, off which I made my dinner. The table was laid as nearly European fashion as their acquaintance with our manners and customs would allow, and there was no lack of wine, if one only knew how to ask for it. The king was about the most gorgeous, and yet nearly the most absurd individual I ever saw. All the effect of his magnificent robes and jewels was injured, not to say spoilt, by the ridiculous addition of a 42nd Highlander's bonnet and plumes, which he wore with an air as if he really thought he had "done it now." Besides the usual black feathers, he had added a bird of paradise plume to one side of it, the whole effect being supremely ridiculous. In other respects, with his yellow and gold dress, and blue velvet mantle powdered with gold *fleurs-de-lis*, his splendid jewelled chains, and his gold embroidered slippers, he was the most gorgeously "got up" individual I ever saw. The chains he wore, three or four in number, were something like the collars of different orders of knighthood, but one mass of pearls or other precious stones. Besides these, he had a string of jewels of immense size hanging about his elbows, an attendant walking close behind him on each side to hold them, for fear they should break off. In fact, as he stood, I should think he would have been cheap at £100,000.

* * At his Majesty's particular request, the Resident gave the Queen's health, followed also, at his request, by three cheers, uncommonly well given by, of course, the English part of the company; the bands playing "God save the Queen" (only they began not exactly at the same time). I think the staid orientals were rather astonished at the row we made, and the king was pleased at having nearly the same noise made when we drank his health afterwards. That done, we all adjourned to a balcony overlooking the entrance-court beyond the throne-room. * * Arm-chairs had been placed for us, and the king was no sooner seated than the fireworks, which had been placed in the court, were let off. Fire-balloons by dozens, rockets by hundreds, elephants with fiery tails on a kind of merry-go-round, fish whirling, serpents hissing, fiery fountains playing, and men with their stomachs full of squibs—it was like the last scene in a grand burlesque. * * A grand bouquet of rockets finished the exhibition and the entertainment, and we all retired, receiving the usual tinsel chains, but avoiding the scent ceremony.—*Captain Egerton's Tour in India.*